

A Call for Strategic Interventions

Given the contemporary complexity of cities, landscape and society, urgent social tasks call for an integral, multidisciplinary approach. Rietveld Landscape's strategic interventions focus and use the forces of existing developments and processes. This design method creates new opportunities for landscape, architecture, the public domain, ecology, recreation and economic activity. The projects Generating Dune Scapes, New Amsterdam Park | Trusted Subcultures and Free Port: Temporarily Open as Strategy illustrate this approach.

"If landscape architecture really wants to make a relevant contribution to the big problems society faces, it is necessary to enter into alliances with researchers, interested parties and specialists. Depending on the assignment, these might be coastal morphologists, historians of architecture or urban geographers. The landscape architect integrates the relevant knowledge at different scale levels and translates this into strategic interventions using a broad set of design skills.

Strategic interventions are precisely chosen and carefully designed urban or landscape interventions that set desired developments in motion. They use the forces of large-scale developments and processes to generate a new context and meaning for qualities that are already present. Apparently contradictory interests and elements on diverse scale levels are linked with one another. The real opportunities for change often lie on a higher scale (such as the regional, national or international level), or in extending the long-term ambitions of the client. Sharp analyses of the possibilities at this strategic level create room for interventions with an important spin-off for society. The meaning, content and quality of our designs is partly based on their relationship with these larger societal issues. The role and experience of various user groups is important in the designs. The interventions stimulate local initiatives or spontaneous use and leave space to be filled in at a later stage. By setting out from subcultures (instead of ethnic backgrounds) with shared interests and concerns, the design brings members of different groups together in a positive and flexible way. This design method leads to unexpected, sometimes paradoxical landscapes and vital public spaces."

- Ronald and Erik Rietveld